

Standard 5-2: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the continued westward expansion of the United States.

5-2.5 Explain the social and economic effects of the westward expansion on Native Americans, including changes in federal policies, armed conflicts, opposing views concerning land ownership, and Native American displacement. (P, G, E, H)

Taxonomy Level: B 2 Understand/ Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

In 4th grade, students explained how conflicts and cooperation among the Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans influenced colonial events including the French and Indian Wars, slave revolts, Native American wars, and trade (4-2.7). They also explained how territorial expansion and related land policies affected Native Americans, including their resistance to having their lands taken over, broken treaties, and the massacre of the Native American people; the Indian Removal Act of 1830; and the Seminole Wars (4-5.4).

In United States history, students will explain the impact and challenges of westward movement, including the major land acquisitions, people's motivations for moving west, railroad construction, the displacement of Native Americans, and the its impact on the developing American character (USHC-3.1).

It is essential for students to know:

Policies of the federal government towards the Native American changed in response to the growing land hunger of whites. Indian policy from colonial times through the mid 19th century was to drive Native Americans inland as whites moved westward. The removal policy pushed Native Americans across the Mississippi River to the Indian Territory (Oklahoma) in the 1830s during the Trail of Tears.

During the Civil War, the Native Americans of the West were mostly left alone. However, federal policy changed in the postwar period as a result of the transcontinental railroad, the discovery of rich mineral deposits on some reservations and continued movement west of white settlers. The destruction of the buffalo by sharpshooters hired by the railroad undermined the culture of the Plains Indians. Pushed onto smaller and smaller reservations, some tribes went to war against the settlers and the soldiers who supported them. The Indian Wars were marked by massacres by white soldiers of Native American women and children such as the Sand Creek Massacre. [1864]

Although treaties between the United States government and Native American tribes granted the Native Americans reservations in their tribal lands and recognized tribal land ownership, these treaties were often not honored by the government. When gold was found in the Black Hills on a reservation, the Native Americans [Lakota Sioux under the leadership of Sitting Bull] were forced off the land against their will. The Battle of Little Bighorn, or "Custer's Last Stand," [1876] between the Native Americans and the United States army created public support for a much larger military force that crushed Native American resistance in the area. A Native American tribe in Oregon [Nez Perce led by Chief Joseph, 1877] fled to Canada rather than be moved off of their traditional lands to Idaho in order to make way for white settlers. However, they were surrounded by the United States army. When they were promised to be allowed to return to Oregon, they surrendered. This promise was not kept and the tribe was taken to a reservation in Oklahoma. Plains Indians of the southwest also attempted to resist [Apaches led by Geronimo] but their leader was eventually captured and returned to a reservation. Soon resistance by other Native American tribes was also broken. Some Native Americans escaped the reservation and attempted to restore their old way of life but they were surrounded by the army at Wounded Knee, South Dakota [1890]. United States soldiers massacred approximately 300 men, women and children as they attempted to give up their weapons. Native American resistance to the reservation policy was over.

Life on the reservation was not easy. Native Americans were forced from their tribal homelands to much less desirable lands to which their culture was not adapted (4-2.2). Plains Indians, whose culture centered on hunting the buffalo, could no longer provide enough food for their families. Although the United States government had promised to supply the Native Americans with food, the corruption of the Bureau of Indian Affairs meant that many Native Americans did not get enough supplies. Poverty, starvation and despondency were prevalent on the reservations. Reformers of the late 19th century were concerned about the plight of the Native Americans and the unfairness of the many treaties broken by the United States government. These reformers believed that if Native Americans would give up their tribal traditions and adopt the ways of the white man they would prosper. A new federal policy took the tribal lands of the reservation and divided it up into farms for individual Native American families [Dawes Severalty Act, 1887]. However, Native Americans had different ideas of land ownership than whites. They believed that the land belonged to the group, not individuals. This policy violated those beliefs and the traditions of hunting that had sustained Native American culture for centuries. Many of the farms belonging to Native Americans failed (as did many farms in the late 19th century that belonged to whites) and the Native Americans lost their land. In addition, reformers believed that Native American children should learn the ways of the white man. Children were taken away from their families and sent to boarding schools faraway [ex. The Carlisle School in Pennsylvania] where they were taught to behave like white children and to speak English. The traditions and values of the Native American culture were not honored in the late 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. Today, as a result of a civil rights movement among Native Americans in the 1960s, their culture is being preserved and their rights honored. However, life on many reservations is still difficult and many Native Americans live in poverty.

It is not essential for students to know:

Students do not need to know the names of tribes or their leaders or the location of the many Indian reservations throughout the West. They do not need to know that the most influential reformer who advocated for better treatment of the Native Americans was Helen Hunt Jackson or that she wrote a book called *Century of Dishonor* which documented the many treaties that were broken by the American government. Students do not need to know about the Ghost Dance, a ritual that some Native Americans believed would bring back the buffalo and the life that they had known before the white man. They do not need to know the details of the Sand Creek Massacre, the Battle of Little Bighorn or the Massacre at Wounded Knee. Students do not need to know the name of the Carlisle School for Native American children.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessment require students to **explain** the social and economic effects of the westward expansion on Native Americans. Students should be able to trace changes in federal policies (removal, reservation, severalty) and **compare** one policy to another. They should be able to **explain** how federal policy led to armed conflict and how opposing views concerning land ownership undermined the claim of Native American to their tribal lands and resulted in Native American displacement.